

Why the grape enamel for Night in Navarre?

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Theme of the Competition

The theme of the competition is described as follows:

The Kingdom of Navarre is located in the Basque Region and has rich cultural traditions. The first of the two competitions is to highlight this unique region in any medium of your choice. Documentation is not required but strongly encouraged.

My take on the theme was to use my skills in vitreous enameling in Champleve style to create a grape medallion which represents the rich winemaking tradition of the Navarre region.

Tempranillo Grapes and Winemaking in Rioja

The reason the grape enamel was chosen is because Navarre has a centuries (millenia even!) long history of winemaking and is most well known for the Tempranillo grape grown heavily in the Rioja DOC. The wine produced here is aged in oak for long periods (can be determined by wine classification - Crianza, Reserva, etc.) and tastes velvety, leathery, and with hints of red fruit. Tempranillo is often called Spain's "Noble Grape."

The Navarre and Rioja region have a history of winemaking dating back to the Phoenicians. Indeed, Tempranillo has been grown here for centuries. The earliest written evidence of grape harvesting in this region is around 873 from a document by Sam Millan.

The King of Navarre and Aragon provided initial legal recognition of the Rioja region in 1102. Rioja began exporting their wine in the 13th century - indicating commercial production. From then on, Rioja focused on wine.



References

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- Wardropper, I., and J. B. Day. *Limoges Enamels at the Frick Collection*. Frick Collection, 2015. <https://books.google.com/books?id=3LcNrgEACAAJ>.

